

HONORING HOSPITAL CORPSMAN THIRD CLASS  
MAXTON SOVIAK

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I am here today on the floor to remember the life of Navy Fleet Marine Force Hospital Corpsman Third Class Maxton Soviak. Max was a 22-year-old native of Berlin Heights, OH, a young patriot who died far too soon in service to all of us.

Max was one of 13 brave American service men and women who were tragically killed when an ISIS-K suicide bomber in Kabul on August 26 exploded a bomb that wounded dozens of others and killed many Afghans. He was there working to evacuate Americans and Afghan allies from a city that was suddenly overrun by the Taliban.

Max was a special guy. They say he was quick to make friends and quick to earn the respect of those he interacted with. As a student at Edison High School, Max was a member of the wrestling team that won the 2016 State championship and a football team that made it to the semifinals 2 years in a row. He was an athlete and a leader. He achieved the rank of Life Scout, the second highest rank a scout can reach. He was a lover of the outdoors, spending his free time doing rock climbing, skiing, scuba diving, and other extreme sports.

And he was one of those rare individuals who, at a young age, had that drive to defend his Nation as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces. He joined the Navy and was signed as a Fleet Marine Force hospital corpsman, serving side by side with the infantry marines of the Second Battalion, First Marine Regiment.

Affectionately known as a “devil doc,” a takeoff on the Marines’ “devil dog” nickname, Max was a member of a select group of medical specialists trained to operate side by side with the men and women of the U.S. Marine Corps on the frontlines, just as he was doing in Kabul the day he died, helping evacuate Americans and our allies who were fleeing the tyranny of the Taliban.

In his far too short time with us, Max did his duty, and he did it with distinction and valor. He took care of his marines and, while in Kabul, cared for innocent Afghans who were fleeing the Taliban.

Kathleen, Max’s sister, said it well: “In Maxton’s final days, he spent his time helping others stay alive, as he had developed a passion for saving the lives of others, so much so, that he was willing to risk his own life and made the ultimate sacrifice.” So true.

Before the attack in Kabul, Max was able to FaceTime his mom, Rachel. As they said their good-byes, his mom told him to be safe.

Max replied:

Don’t worry, mom, my guys got me. They won’t let anything happen to me.

That was the last time she spoke to him before Max and his fellow marines and soldiers gave their lives in service of keeping so many others—moms,

dads, kids, and fellow servicemembers—safe. He didn’t want anything to happen to us.

For his bravery and sacrifice, Max was awarded the Purple Heart and a Combat Action Ribbon. When he came home to Berlin Heights, OH, he was greeted with a hero’s welcome that he richly deserved. Families lined the streets as his casket, draped in the American flag, was brought home to his family.

When I visited his hometown over the weekend to deliver an American flag flown over the U.S. Capitol in honor of his service, there were flags in every yard and posters and flowers; you could sense the love and support for Max and for his family from his grateful neighbors. Yesterday, hundreds came to the Edison High School football stadium, where Max had helped lead the Chargers to victory time and time again; they came to pay their last respects to an honorable American life taken too soon in service of all of us.

Max’s sacrifice, along with that of the other marines and soldiers who died or were grievously wounded that day, reminds us of how blessed we are to have such courageous and selfless fellow citizens willing to stand guard for us. We must be grateful for the sacrifices our troops make every day to keep America safe. My thoughts and prayers are with Max’s parents, Kip and Rachel Soviak, and his entire family, as well as those he knew and who loved him. May God comfort them in the days and weeks ahead.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

HONORING LANCE CORPORAL RYLEE MCCOLLUM

Ms. LUMMIS. Madam President, Wyoming’s heart is heavy with grief today. I rise to honor the life, sacrifice, and memory of Wyoming native LCpl Rylee McCollum. He, along with 12 of his fellow servicemembers, lost their lives while defending the airport in Kabul as American citizens and allies escaped the clutches of the Taliban. Their selfless service and sacrifice will be honored and remembered, and they will be forever cherished by a grateful nation.

Rylee was a Wyoming guy through and through. His life’s goal of serving in the U.S. Marine Corps began seemingly while he was still in diapers, before he could even comprehend what that entailed. He was born with the heart of a soldier.

He joined the military right out of high school. He heard the call to defend our Nation, and he didn’t hesitate to answer that call. He had plans to become a history teacher and coach once he finished his commitment to the Marines. He was about to become a father.

I had the opportunity to meet with some of Rylee’s family this past weekend. I had the great honor of expressing my deepest appreciation of Rylee’s sacrifice to them in person on behalf of a very grateful Wyoming. Wyoming’s very special way of honoring its beloved Rylee was on full display last Friday.

People waving American flags lined the streets of Jackson to give Rylee a hero’s welcome as his remains were returned home. The people of Wyoming are heartbroken but infinitely proud of his bravery and sacrifice.

Just yesterday, September 13, 2021, Rylee’s family welcomed into the world his daughter, Levi Rylee Rose—8 pounds, 10 ounces. Although she will never meet her father, who was killed before she was born, she will be surrounded by love from mother Gigi, proud grandfather Jim McCollum, Rylee’s sisters, and many other relatives who will share with Levi what a wonderful and heroic father she had.

Our hearts, our love, our prayers, and our embrace are with Rylee’s wife, child, friends, and family as they grieve his loss and remember his bravery.

Madam President, Wyoming will never ever forget.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Nebraska.

HONORING CORPORAL DAEGAN WILLIAM TYELER  
PAGE

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in memory and in honor of Corporal Page, a 23-year-old marine from Nebraska. He gave his life defending Americans and our allies in the chaos of the Kabul airport as many tried to escape the capture of Afghanistan by a band of blood-thirsty terrorists.

Corporal Page is 1 of 13 heroes who gave his life that day defending the Kabul airport in the midst of that chaotic evacuation. The American people owe these men and women a debt of gratitude that we will never be able to repay.

Corporal Page lost his life while honoring our Nation’s promise that we would leave no one behind. He and his fellow marines never wavered. They didn’t fail in executing their duty. They were given an impossible mission, and these men and women fought to the end. It is now our duty to stand with these families, the families of each of these 13, and to honor their sacrifices.

Last Friday, in Omaha, thousands and thousands and thousands of Nebraskans lined the streets to give Corporal Page a hero’s welcome as his body was returned home. As his family said, “Our hearts are still broken, but we are the lucky few who know what it is” to have the entire city of Omaha give you a hug.

We are called to gather around one another. We are called to join with the grieving and to mourn the loss of these brave men and women.

Corporal Page was a Nebraskan who made his family and his State and his entire Nation proud. He left for boot camp shortly after graduating from Millard South High School, and he was proud to serve in the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment with his fellow marines.

He enjoyed playing hockey. One of my kids played hockey against him. He